NEWS

Wet and windy start to January

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The start of 2018 will be unsettled with low-pressure systems continuing to move across the UK from the Atlantic, bringing frequently wet and windy weather to the UK.

Many parts will have a bright and cold feeling day on New Year's Day, although extensive cloud and rain in the south will continue to slowly clear away eastwards, whilst some showers and more persistent rain and hill snow will affect Northern Ireland, southern Scotland and northern England at times.

Andy Page, Met Office Chief Forecaster, said: "The unsettled theme continues throughout this week, with further spells of rain moving across the UK from the west as many return to work on Tuesday, and there will again be some snow over the high ground in Scotland.

"The wind will pick up again later on Tuesday and Wednesday is expected to be very windy across England and Wales, with gales or severe gales in places and National Severe Weather Warnings have been issued for these strong winds. The gales, combined with locally thundery downpours may make driving difficult and cause some disruption."

Carol Holt, flood duty manager for the Environment Agency, said: "Unsettled weather with strong winds and at times large waves, combined with high tides, could lead to some coastal flooding from Tuesday until Thursday.

"Our frontline teams are on the ground checking defences and may close coastal flood gates this week. We urge people to stay safe on the coast – take extreme care on coastal paths and promenades, and don't put yourself in unnecessary danger trying to take 'storm selfies'. If you're travelling, please check your route before setting off and don't drive through flood water.

"We will issue flood alerts and warnings as necessary, so please check www.gov.uk/flood for the latest advice or call Floodline on 0345 988 1188."

Unsettled weather will continue through the rest of the week with further bouts of wet and windy weather interspersed with brighter, showery periods. There may be snow at times across northern areas, especially Scotland, as well as ice at night between the wet spells.

Looking ahead to the weekend Deputy Chief Forecaster Dan Harris added: "Later in the week and over the weekend there are signs of a trend to colder conditions, especially in the north, with clearer skies for many and a return of the risk of frost, ice and wintry showers. It could remain more unsettled in the south. The details of the forecast later this week and into the weekend are extremely uncertain at this stage, so my advice is to keep up to date with the latest forecasts as confidence will increase later in the week."

Whatever weather we experience over the next few days you can make sure that you and those around you are prepared for winter weather and can cope with its impacts. You'll always find the most up to date information on our forecast pages, Twitter and Facebook, as well as our mobile app.

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